

# **Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure for Academic Misconduct**

**Applicable from September 2025 to Present**

<b>Purpose of procedure</b>	This document sets out the University's approach to maintaining academic integrity and the process that will be followed in the event of suspected academic misconduct in a student's work.
<b>Internal services involved</b>	Academic Registry Academic Schools
<b>Related regulations, policies and procedures</b>	Academic Regulations (Taught) Academic Regulations (Research Degrees) Examination Procedures Fitness to Practise Procedure Policy on Misconduct in Research Academic Appeals Procedure
<b>Enquiries to</b>	Student Casework Team.
<b>Senior Manager(s) responsible</b>	Deputy Registrar
<b>VCG Lead</b>	Pro-Vice Chancellor (Students & Teaching)

<b>Version</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>Effective from</b>	<b>Revisions made</b>	<b>Next Review</b>
1	May 2023	September 2023		May 2024
2	May 2024	September 2024	Amendment to Category 1 outcome	May 2025
3	July 2025	September 2025	University name change and branding	May 2026

## **1. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

- 1.1** Academic integrity is defined as upholding honest and truthful standards of academic behaviour and is a fundamental principle within the University of Central Lancashire, strongly linked to good academic practice. The Academic Integrity Policy sets out the University's approach to maintaining the academic integrity of students' work. This is underpinned by the Procedure for Academic Misconduct which sets out the steps the University will take in suspected cases of academic misconduct.
- 1.2** The University adopts a strategic approach to the prevention and management of academic misconduct. This is cognisant of the University strategies for Learning and Teaching and Research. The University advocates a holistic approach and fosters a culture of academic and research integrity amongst staff and students, by providing a coherent set of Academic and Research Degree Regulations and guidelines for implementation by Schools and Services.
- 1.3** The University recognises that all academic and professional services staff, holding a variety of roles, have the responsibility to promote a culture of academic and research integrity, acting as role models for students and their peers.
- 1.4** Student support, advice and guidance will be provided within Schools and by central University services to facilitate student personal and professional development, with an emphasis on information literacy, study skills and problem solving.
- 1.5** Importance is placed on providing education for staff and students and raising awareness of the importance of academic integrity. Students will be expected to develop sound academic practice throughout the duration of their studies at the University of Lancashire. Education about what constitutes academic misconduct, its consequences and how to achieve sound academic practice will be provided for all students, across all courses at all levels. The use of Turnitin is promoted as both an education and detection tool, together with a range of deterrents.
- 1.6** Course teams are responsible for 'designing out' the potential for academic misconduct by implementing robust procedures for curriculum design, student recruitment, course delivery, assessment and evaluation and through continuous enhancement.
- 1.7** Standards and behaviour expected of students will be made explicit to students,

including standards of proficiency and competencies required by Professional Statutory Regulatory Bodies and Research Council Codes of Practice, in a range of verbal communication, written and electronic resources.

**1.8** Schools are responsible for investigating suspected cases of academic misconduct and imposing penalties determined by circumstances and evidence presented in accordance with the Academic and Research Degree Regulations. Schools will monitor the occurrence of academic misconduct utilising standardised templates which will be reported centrally to the relevant sub-committee of Academic Board. Incidents will be systematically collated and School action plans focusing on improvements will be monitored.

**1.9** The following table summarises the commitments by staff and students to promote academic integrity and eliminate academic misconduct:

<b>Schools will:</b>	<b>Students will:</b>
Design assessments which are engaging, relevant and minimise the potential for academic misconduct.	Engage with all assessments in a timely, honest and professional manner.
Deliver assessment schedules and information in a timely and effective manner.	Use best efforts to meet assessment deadlines and be familiar with the guidance on referencing, proof-reading and ethics relevant to their discipline area.
Support students from all backgrounds to achieve sound academic practice across courses at all levels.	Engage positively with the range of support that is available from Schools and central Services.
Provide information and education about what constitutes academic misconduct and its consequences.	Understand what constitutes academic misconduct and how it can be avoided by using effective referencing and citation practices.
Promote the use of Turnitin and other technologies as an education and detection tool.	Make use of Turnitin as an education and detection tool.
Investigate suspected cases of academic misconduct in a fair and timely manner.	Engage positively with any investigation, including retaining and providing copies of drafts of assessed work.

Monitor cases of academic misconduct and develop action plans focusing on improvements.	Take steps to secure their work, hardware, software, laptops, data etc from improper use by others.
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## 2. **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT PROCEDURE**

- 2.1 Assessment is the means by which the University tests whether a student has achieved the learning outcomes of their course and the standards of an award. It is a fundamental principle that students are assessed fairly and on equal terms.
- 2.2 Material submitted for assessment in any form must be the student's own work. Students must produce work for assessment and engage in examinations in a timely, honest and professional manner, and without attempting to gain an unfair advantage.
- 2.3 Students are bound by the Academic Regulations and are expected to familiarise themselves with these and also the guidance on referencing and proof-reading provided during the course, and ethical policies relevant to their discipline as appropriate. Students must retain draft copies of work used in the preparation of final submissions to help prove the work is their own, if challenged.
- 2.4 The University regards all cases of academic misconduct seriously and penalties will be imposed where academic misconduct is proven. Students should be aware that a record of academic misconduct may have significant academic and professional consequences. Students can be excluded from the University for very serious or repeat offences.

## 3 **Scope**

- 3.1 This Procedure applies to all students including members of staff who are registered as students for a University award, including those studying at a partner institution in the UK or overseas. It applies to all taught courses and postgraduate research degrees, professional doctorates, professional awards and apprenticeships.
- 3.2 This Procedure applies to the preparation and presentation of all forms of assessed work including without limitation: written and oral examinations and other time-constrained assessments, coursework, essays, assignments, projects, dissertations, theses, presentations, practical work, placement or field trip reports

and the production of artefacts.

- 3.3 This Procedure should be read in conjunction with the Academic Regulations which set out the regulations governing academic misconduct and the Examination Procedures for taught and research programmes.
- 3.4 Where students on professionally regulated courses and/or who are professional registrants are found to have engaged in academic misconduct under this Procedure, the matter will be referred to the Dean of School to consider whether further action is required in accordance with the University Fitness to Practise Procedure and/or the relevant professional body guidance.
- 3.5 Allegations of research misconduct (e.g. fabrication, falsification or misrepresentation of data or contravention of ethical principles) will normally be considered in the first instance in line with the Policy on Misconduct in Research. The case may subsequently be referred to the Academic Misconduct Committee for consideration.
- 3.6 Where evidence of academic misconduct becomes apparent after the recommendation of the Assessment or Research Degrees Board, the matter will be investigated and the original decision may be set aside if appropriate.
- 3.7 Where academic misconduct is suspected or proven academic misconduct, the University will reserve the right to investigate previously marked work and apply penalties in line with this Procedure.
- 3.8 Where academic misconduct is established after an award has been conferred, the Assessment Board may recommend that the award be rescinded in accordance with the Academic Regulations.

#### **4 Principles**

- 4.1 Academic Integrity Leads and Academic Misconduct Committees have authority on behalf of the Academic Board to impose penalties for academic misconduct.
- 4.2 Where academic misconduct is suspected, an Assessment or Research Degrees Board shall not determine the student's assessment result until the facts have been established and the case has been concluded. The assessment and/or research in question may be suspended as an interim measure pending the outcome of this

Procedure.

- 4.3 The University will aim to deal with suspected cases of academic misconduct within 25 working days from the date when the marks are released. In exceptional cases, where it becomes clear that the investigation is likely to be complex, variation of the timescale and the reasons for this will be notified to the student.
- 4.4 Interviews and hearings may be conducted remotely via Microsoft Teams or in person at any University campus or partner institution. Students will be asked to present their University ID card.
- 4.5 Confidentiality will be preserved during the investigation of an allegation of academic misconduct to protect the interests of everyone concerned, unless disclosure is necessary to progress the investigation in line with the rules of natural justice. The University expects that all parties will respect the confidentiality of the process.

## **5. Support for Students**

- 5.1 Students who are suspected of engaging in academic misconduct under this Procedure are strongly encouraged to seek independent advice and support from the Students' Union Advice and Representation Centre.
- 5.2 At all stages of this Procedure, a student is entitled to be accompanied by a person of their choosing, who may be from the Students' Union Advice and Representation Centre. Any person accompanying the student at any stage in this Procedure is there in a supporting capacity. The name and designation of any supporting person must be given to the Student Casework Team 48 hours before any meeting.
- 5.3 This Procedure is intended to be fair and to comply with the rules of natural justice. It is not a formal court process and, therefore, should not be adversarial or overly legalistic, and there is no need for anyone to have formal legal representation. A student may be accompanied by a person who is legally qualified, providing that person understands and respects the nature of the hearing and does not adopt an overly adversarial or legalistic stance.
- 5.4 Other support is available from Student Services in relation to student wellbeing, from WISER in relation to overcoming poor academic practice and developing study skills, and from Student Coaches.

## **6. Reasonable Adjustments**

- 6.1 Reasonable adjustments will be made where students have mobility or communication difficulties so that they may be informed of the process and have the opportunity to present their case, test the evidence, and offer an explanation.

## **7. Identifying Academic Misconduct**

- 7.1 Academic judgment will be applied based on the evidence that is available, when identifying suspected cases of academic misconduct. It is not necessary for intent to be proven in determining whether an offence of academic misconduct has occurred. It is sufficient that a particular act or omission has occurred.
- 7.2 The method of detection will depend on the nature and form of the assessed work.
- 7.3 Students' work may be submitted electronically to Turnitin UK which is a web-based system that provides comprehensive checking of submitted work for matching text on web pages, electronic journals and previously submitted student work. Turnitin UK generates an Originality Report to facilitate the identification of potential plagiarism cases. The Originality Report can be used as evidence and to support the related decision-making process.

## **8. Academic Judgment**

- 8.1 Academic judgment will be applied in:
- interpreting detection software reports, where the substance of the copied material will be considered as well as the quantity, and there is no percentage threshold for an investigation to be initiated; and
  - determining the nature and severity of the matter and whether poor academic practice, academic misconduct or gross academic misconduct has occurred.

## **9. Standard of Proof**

- 9.1 The University will decide whether an allegation of academic misconduct is proven based on the evidence presented during the investigation. The standard of proof will be the civil standard of proof which means that 'on a balance of probabilities', the facts of the allegation are more likely than not to have happened.



## **10. Poor Academic Practice**

- 10.1 Poor academic practice falls short of academic misconduct and normally occurs where a student has attempted but failed to adopt good academic practice. It is normally the result of a failure to understand the required protocols and is most likely to occur at an early stage in the course and form a relatively small part of the student's assessed work.
- 10.2 Examples of poor academic practice include inadequate referencing, omitting to include quotation marks or gaps in the reference list. The University will apply academic judgment in determining whether poor academic practice or academic misconduct has occurred.

## **11. Definitions of Academic Misconduct**

- 11.1 Academic misconduct is defined as any action or attempted action by a student which gives or has the potential to give an unfair advantage in an assessment or might assist another student to gain an unfair advantage or otherwise undermines the academic integrity of the University. Academic misconduct includes the following without limitation:

### **11.2 Cheating**

Cheating is defined a form of examination malpractice relating to formal invigilated examinations or other assessments. Examples of cheating include without limitation:

- communicating with another candidate during an examination
- communicating with any other person other than an authorised invigilator or other member of staff during an examination
- copying or attempting to copy from another candidate during an examination
- possession of any written or printed materials during an examination, unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations
- possession of any electronically stored information or accessing any information via a network during an examination, unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations
- use of any information, communication, technology device e.g. mobile phone, watch or calculator during an examination, unless expressly permitted by the

examination regulations

- substitution of examination materials
- impersonation e.g. where a student arranges for someone else to impersonate them or impersonates another person in an examination, test or hearing
- gaining or attempting to gain access to unauthorised assessment materials in advance of the specified time, unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations
- obtaining a copy of a written examination paper in advance of the date and time for its authorised release.

### **11.3 Plagiarism**

Plagiarism occurs where a student copies words or ideas from another person and presents those words or ideas as their own in an assessment without properly acknowledging and citing the source(s). Examples of plagiarism include, without limitation:

- the inclusion in a student's work of another's work whether published or not without proper acknowledgement
- the substantial summarising of another's work without proper acknowledgement
- the substantial and unauthorised use of the ideas of another person without proper acknowledgement.

### **11.4 Re-presentation of work**

Re-presentation of work occurs where a student submits the same work in full or in part, that they have previously submitted for academic credit, where this is not expressly permitted by the assessment brief.

### **11.5 Collusion**

Collusion is an attempt to deceive the examiners by disguising the true authorship of an assessed piece of work in full or in part. Examples of collusion include without limitation:

- where student A copies, or imitates in close detail, student B's work
- where two or more students divide the elements of an assignment among themselves,  
and copy, or imitate in close detail, one another's answers.

All students involved will be regarded as jointly responsible in cases of collusion. It is also an offence of collusion to allow one's work to be copied or imitated in close detail. Students should take reasonable steps to safeguard their work, data and hardware from improper use by others.

Collusion should not be confused with the normal situation in which students learn from one another, sharing ideas, as they generate the knowledge and understanding necessary for each of them successfully and independently to undertake an assignment or research project. Nor should it be confused with group work on an assignment or research project where this is specifically authorised.

### **11.6 Unauthorised Use of Technology**

Academic misconduct will occur where a student uses technological aids and/or Artificial Intelligence (AI) to generate all or part of an assessment without specific authorisation, including translation software, paraphrasing tools, text generating software (essay bots) and tools to generate graphics or artworks.

### **11.7 Commissioning of Assessed Work**

Commissioning occurs where a student commissions a third party to complete all or part of an assessed piece of work and then submits it as their own. Commissioned work may be pre-written or specifically prepared for the student. It might be obtained from a company or an individual and may or may not involve a financial transaction. It includes the use of essay mills or buying work on-line or the use of a proof-reading service that includes re-writing the original assessed piece of work.

Where it is suspected that a student has submitted work that has not been written by them, the student may be asked questions about the work during an interview with the Academic Integrity Officer or Academic Misconduct Committee to give them the opportunity to demonstrate appropriate knowledge of the subject matter and that they understand the content of the work. Students must keep copies of drafts and other materials used in researching and preparing their work.

### **11.8 Falsification and Fabrication of Data**

Falsification occurs where data, evidence or experimental results are altered or enhanced. Fabrication occurs where a student creates data, results or other outputs and presents them as if they were real.

## **11.9 Ethical Breaches**

Ethical breaches may occur where there is a failure to comply with University and School research and ethics policies and procedures, including conducting research and data collection without prior ethical approval from the University. Students should ensure that they are familiar with the ethical policies of the University and their discipline area.

### **11.10 Any Other Attempt to Deceive**

Any other deliberate attempt to deceive, including offering a bribe to any member of staff or external person who is connected to the University.

## **12. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **12.1 Academic Integrity Lead**

Each Dean of School will appoint an Academic Integrity Lead and one or more Deputy Academic Integrity Lead(s) in order to ensure a consistent approach to the promotion of academic integrity within the School and the detection and investigation of cases of academic misconduct.

The role of the Academic Integrity Lead is to:

- provide advice and guidance to staff on academic integrity related issues
- decide the level at which each case should be managed and when cases should be referred to the Academic Misconduct Committee
- manage the Category 2 and 3 processes
- monitor the occurrence of academic misconduct within the School and report on this to Academic Registry
- create action plans for the School focusing on improvements
- assist with the delivery of staff development on academic integrity related issues.

One or more Deputy Academic Integrity Lead will support the Academic Integrity Lead in dealing with cases within the School, including any cases where the Academic Integrity Lead has been involved in the teaching, supervision or assessment of the student concerned.

Training will be provided for all new and continuing Academic Integrity and Deputy

Academic Integrity Leads.

## **12.2 Academic Misconduct Committee**

The membership of the Academic Misconduct Committee (the Committee) will normally comprise as a minimum:

- Dean of School who will act as Chair
- One member of staff from the School (who will normally be an Associate Dean or Principal Lecturer)
- An elected officer of the Students' Union

The Committee may co-opt additional members in complex cases or where specialist expertise is required. In the case of a PGR degree, the Committee shall also include the Chair of the Research Degrees Board or nominee.

No members of the Committee will have been involved in the teaching, supervision or assessment of the student concerned.

The terms of reference of the Academic Misconduct Committee shall be:

- to determine the facts of the case based on the evidence before it
- to decide on the balance of probabilities whether academic misconduct has occurred
- to consider any explanation given by the student
- to confirm the penalty in cases where it is established that academic misconduct has occurred.

## **13. Procedure following an Allegation of Academic Misconduct**

- 13.1 Any member of staff or examiner (internal or external) who has cause to suspect that academic misconduct has occurred at the point of submission or preparation of an assessment should report the case to the relevant Academic Integrity Lead and provide any evidence to support the allegation.
- 13.2 Where academic misconduct is identified during any taught or research degree examination, the matter should be reported to the Academic Registry in the first instance, who will refer the matter to the appropriate Academic Integrity Lead for consideration – see appendix 1.

13.3 The Academic Integrity Lead will review the evidence and may consult with the Deputy Academic Integrity Lead and/or relevant staff to decide whether there is a case to answer and, if so, how it should be managed in line with one of the following categories. Academic judgment will be applied in determining whether poor academic practice or academic misconduct has occurred. The Academic Integrity Lead will check the student record to determine whether there are any previous findings of academic misconduct on record.

13.4 The Academic Integrity Lead will deal with cases within Categories 2 and 3. For other cases including potential Category 4 cases of gross academic misconduct, the Academic Integrity Lead will conduct an initial investigation, which may involve interviewing the student, before referring the case to the Academic Misconduct Committee for consideration.

#### **14. Categories of Academic Misconduct**

##### **14.1 Category 1: Poor Academic Practice**

This covers a range of poor academic practices (see previous definition in paragraph 10). Examples of Category 1 poor academic practice include, without limitation:

- inadequate referencing
- omitting quotation marks

##### **14.2 Category 2: Academic Misconduct**

Category 2 academic misconduct will normally be defined as a first instance of academic misconduct. Where there is evidence of academic misconduct in multiple assignments that were submitted at the same time within the same cycle of assessment(s), this will normally be treated as a single occurrence. Examples of Category 2 academic misconduct include, without limitation:

- Plagiarism
- Re-presentation of work
- Collusion
- Cheating/examination malpractice
- Repeat instances of poor academic practice

#### 14.3 **Category 3: Academic Misconduct**

Category 3 academic misconduct will normally be defined as a repeat offence of academic misconduct in any form, where the student has previously incurred a penalty and a warning for academic misconduct, and where the repeat instance occurs in a subsequent cycle of assessment(s). Examples of Category 3 academic misconduct include, without limitation:

- Repeat instances of category 2 academic misconduct in any form
- Cheating/examination malpractice

#### 14.4. **Category 4: Gross Academic Misconduct**

Category 4 will normally be defined as gross academic misconduct where a clear intent to deceive and gain an unfair academic advantage can be established. Examples of Category 4 gross academic misconduct include, without limitation:

- A repeat instance of Category 3 academic misconduct in any form
- Impersonation
- Commissioning of assessed work
- Fabrication or falsification of data

#### 15. **Developmental Engagement (Category 1)**

- 15.1 Where poor academic practice is identified, the student will be invited to a meeting with a member of staff who will explain the nature of the concern.
- 15.2 This will be a formative learning opportunity for the student who will be given advice and will be referred to relevant support and educational opportunities regarding good academic practice. The student may be required to undertake an online academic integrity learning activity.
- 15.3 The outcome will be determined via the standard marking processes, and the mark for the element of assessment may be reduced (by 10% of the maximum mark) to reflect the failure to address the assessment criteria regarding referencing.
- 15.4 The student will be informed that if poor academic practice occurs in the future, it will be dealt with by a formal meeting with the Academic Integrity Lead and associated penalties will be imposed.

- 15.5 The member of staff will complete a record of the meeting using a standard form which will outline the advice given and will be signed by the student and the member of staff. A copy will be given to the student. A record will be retained on the Starfish system for the purposes of taking appropriate action if further instances occur, although this will not form part of the formal student record.
16. **Interview with the Academic Integrity Lead (Categories 2 and 3)**
- 16.1 The Academic Integrity Lead will consider all Category 2 and 3 academic misconduct cases and potential Category 4 gross academic misconduct cases. The Academic Integrity Lead will consider the evidence and may consult with relevant staff, to decide whether there is a case to answer and, if so, how it should be managed. As part of this process, the student record will be checked to determine whether there are any previous findings of academic misconduct.
- 16.2 The Academic Integrity Lead will invite the student to attend an interview to discuss the alleged case of academic misconduct. The purpose of the interview will be to give the student the opportunity to establish to the University's satisfaction that the work is their own.
- 16.3 The student will be given at least 5 working days' notice of the time, date and place of the interview. The following information will be included with the notice:
- the grounds on which the alleged academic misconduct is believed to have occurred
  - a copy of the originality report or other evidence to be referred to in the meeting
  - the right to seek advice from the Students' Union Advice and Representation Centre
  - the right to be accompanied by a friend or member of the Students' Union Advice and Representation Centre.
- 16.4 The Course Leader (or nominee) or Chief Examination Invigilator may be present to explain the allegation in detail. A member of staff from the Student Casework Team will be in attendance to advise on the process and take a record of the interview using a standard report template.
- 16.5 If the student does not attend the interview without good cause, a decision may



be made in their absence and a penalty may be imposed (see below).

16.6 In suspected cases of collusion, the Academic Integrity Lead will require individual interviews with all parties involved.

16.7 The Academic Integrity Lead may:

- ask the student to provide evidence that shows how they prepared for and wrote the assessed work e.g. copies of drafts or notes; and/or
- ask questions about the submitted work during the interview to give the student the opportunity to demonstrate appropriate knowledge of the subject matter and that they understand the content of the work.

16.8 The Academic Integrity Lead will:

- determine the facts of the case on the basis of the evidence before them
- decide on the balance of probability whether academic misconduct has occurred
- consider any explanation given by the student
- consider any aggravating factors e.g. any previous finding of academic misconduct;
- confirm the penalty in cases where it is established that Category 2 or 3 academic misconduct has occurred
- refer the case to an Academic Misconduct Committee where it is believed that Category 4 gross academic misconduct has occurred.

16.9 The student will normally be notified verbally of the outcome and the associated reasons at the end of the interview. Written notification of the outcome and the associated reasons will be sent to the student within 5 working days of the meeting, along with the formal record of the meeting. The outcome letter will identify the evidence considered, the regulations applied, the decision on the outcome and the penalty and associated reasons and the student's right of appeal.

16.10 The Academic Integrity Lead will report the outcome to the Assessment Board or Research Degrees Board.

17. **Referral to an Academic Misconduct Committee (Category 4)**

- 17.1 An Academic Misconduct Committee will be convened where:
- the Academic Integrity Lead in consultation with relevant staff considers that there is a suspected case of Category 4 gross academic misconduct; or
  - a case is referred from the University's Policy on Research Misconduct.
- 17.2 The Academic Integrity Lead or Research Misconduct Committee will prepare a written report explaining the nature of the alleged offence and provide supporting evidence. The report will state why the alleged offence is considered to be gross academic misconduct including why there is considered to be a deliberate attempt to deceive and gain an unfair academic advantage.
- 17.3 The student will be invited to a hearing with the Academic Misconduct Committee. The purpose of the hearing will be to give the student the opportunity to put their case, and to establish to the University's satisfaction, that the work is their own.
- 17.4 The Academic Misconduct Committee may:
- ask the student to provide evidence that shows how they prepared for and wrote the assessed work e.g. copies of drafts or notes; and/or
  - ask questions about the submitted work during the meeting to give the student the opportunity to demonstrate appropriate knowledge of the subject matter and that they understand the content of the work.
- 17.5 The student will be given at least 5 working days' notice of the time, date and place of the hearing. The following information will be included with the notice:
- the grounds on which the alleged academic misconduct is believed to have occurred
  - a copy of a report prepared by the Academic Integrity Lead or Research Misconduct Committee and any supporting evidence
  - the right to seek advice from the Students' Union Advice and Representation Centre
  - the right to be accompanied by a friend or member of the Students' Union Advice and Representation Centre
  - the right to call witnesses and give evidence.

- 17.6 The student will be asked to submit a written statement in response to the allegation together with any evidence e.g. copies of drafts or notes.
- 17.7 The Academic Integrity Lead and/or Course Leader and/or Chair of the Research Misconduct Committee (or nominee) will normally be present to explain the allegation in detail. A member of the Student Casework Team will be in attendance to advise on the process and take a formal record of the meeting using a standard report template.
- 17.8 If the student does not attend without good cause, a decision may be made in their absence and a penalty may be imposed (see below).
- 17.9 The order of proceedings at the meeting will normally be as follows:
- The Academic Misconduct Committee will convene in private session to discuss the case and what questions need to be asked.
  - The student and any representative and the presenting member(s) of staff who will normally be the Academic Integrity Lead, will attend the meeting at the same time.
  - The Chair will invite all those present to introduce themselves and their role in the proceedings and will explain the purpose and structure of the hearing and the possible outcomes.
  - The Chair will invite the presenting member(s) of staff to present the case.
  - The Committee and the student (or representative) may ask questions.
  - The Chair will invite the student (or representative) to explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged academic misconduct from their perspective and respond to the allegation of academic misconduct.
  - The Committee and the presenting member(s) of staff may ask questions.
  - Any witnesses called by the presenting member(s) of staff or the student may be called at this point, where previously agreed by the Chair.
  - The present member(s) of staff will be invited to sum up.

- The student (or representative) will be invited to give an explanation and to sum up their case.
- Once the Chair is satisfied that all questioning is completed, all parties apart from the Committee and member of Academic Registry will withdraw.
- The Committee will deliberate to reach a decision, and may seek further information and/or adjourn to a later date.

17.10 The Academic Misconduct Committee will:

- determine the facts of the case based on the evidence before it
- decide on the balance of probabilities whether academic misconduct has occurred and its severity
- consider any explanation given by the student
- consider any aggravating factors e.g. whether it is a repeat offence
- confirm the penalty where it is established that academic misconduct including gross academic misconduct has occurred.

17.11 The student will normally be notified verbally of the outcome and the associated reasons at the end of the meeting. Written notification of the outcome and the associated reasons will be sent to the student along with the record of the meeting, within 5 working days of the meeting. The outcome letter will identify the regulations applied, the evidence considered, the decision on the outcome and penalty and the associated reasons and the student's right of appeal.

17.12 The Chair will ensure that all cases are formally recorded using a standard report template and reported to the Assessment Board or Research Degrees Board.

## 18. Penalties for Academic Misconduct

18.1 The penalties for academic misconduct will be determined based on:

- the severity of the case
- the circumstances of the case
- the level at which the offence took place
- what stage of the programme the student is at
- whether it was a repeat offence
- any explanation given by the student
- the extent to which a clear intent to deceive and gain an unfair academic advantage has been established.

## 18.2 Academic Penalties for Taught Awards

Category	Penalty
Cat. 1	<p>The outcomes will be determined via the standard marking processes. The element of assessment will be marked and the mark will be reduced (by 10% of the original mark) to reflect the failure to address the assessment criteria regarding referencing.</p> <p>The student will be given advice and will be referred to relevant support and learning opportunities regarding good academic practice.</p>

Cat. 2	<p>A mark of 0% for the element of assessment which must be resubmitted where permitted*, to the required standard. The mark for the element of assessment following resubmission will be capped at the minimum pass mark.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>A mark of 0% for the element of assessment which must be resubmitted where permitted*, to the required standard. The mark for the module following resubmission will be capped at the minimum pass mark.</p> <p>Plus</p> <p>A written warning setting out the consequences of further academic misconduct and a referral to learning opportunities regarding good academic practice. A flag will be placed on the student record system.</p>
Cat. 3	<p>A mark of 0% for the module with no opportunity for re-assessment. The student may be permitted to retake the module in a subsequent year when the module result will be capped at the pass mark for the module.</p> <p>Plus</p> <p>A final written warning setting out the consequences of further academic misconduct and a referral to learning opportunities regarding good academic practice. A flag will be place on the student record system.</p>

Cat. 4	<p>Level failed and a requirement to withdraw from the programme. (This does not preclude the student from applying for re-admission to the University after a period of time defined by the Committee.)</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Expulsion from the University on a permanent basis.</p> <p>The Academic Misconduct Committee will advise the Assessment Board regarding the student's entitlement to any exit award or credit achieved. The student will normally be entitled to retain an exit award or any credits awarded for work that has already been passed without evidence of academic misconduct.</p> <p>A flag will be placed on the student record system.</p>
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\*Where academic misconduct is detected for the first time on a reassessment for an already failed assessment, no further reassessment will be permitted and the appropriate fail grade will be conferred.

The above penalties will apply where a student transfers from one University of Lancashire course to another during their period of studies and module credits gained on the former course are transferred to the current course.

### 18.3 Academic Penalties for Postgraduate Research Degrees

Category	Penalty
Cat. 2	<p>In the event of a single offence of academic misconduct at any point in the postgraduate research student journey, including registration, transfer, annual progression or examination, the following penalties may be imposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- referral for reassessment with or without a further viva, where a viva formed part of the original assessment strategy</li> <li>- that the maximum level of award be defined as MPhil, where a student is seeking registration or is registered for a PhD</li> <li>- failure of the award.</li> </ul> <p>Where the outcome of the appeal states that the maximum level of</p>

	award should be MPhil, the examination process must be completed to ensure the student meets the criteria for the award of MPhil.
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Cat. 3 & 4	In the event of a repeat offence of academic misconduct on the same research degree (irrespective of whether the repeat offence involves the same form of academic misconduct), the appropriate penalty should be failure of the degree or expulsion, depending on the severity of the case.
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## 19. **Explanatory Circumstances**

- 19.1 Students will have the opportunity to provide an explanation for their actions during an interview with the Academic Integrity Lead or Academic Misconduct Committee. Any explanation will not be relevant to deciding whether academic misconduct has occurred but may be taken into account when deciding on the penalty.
- 19.2 Where students experience circumstances which affect their performance, there are University procedures for students to apply for mitigating circumstances, and such cases will be treated in a supportive and appropriate way. Given the existence of these procedures, mitigating circumstances should not be considered in deciding whether academic misconduct has taken place, and may only be considered in determining the level of penalty where there is evidence of compelling personal circumstances which impaired the student's judgement.

## 20. **Appeal**

- 20.1 The student may, where there are valid grounds, submit an appeal within 10 working days of the official notification of the outcome of a decision by the Academic Integrity Lead or the Academic Misconduct Committee in line with the Academic Appeals Procedure.
- 20.2 Appeals against decisions on academic misconduct will only be valid if they are based on the following grounds:
- i) that the original hearing was not conducted fairly and/or in accordance with the published procedure
  - ii) that the original decision was unreasonable in all the circumstances.
- 20.3 An appeal against a decision by an Academic Misconduct Committee on a Category 4 case of academic misconduct will proceed directly to the second stage of the Academic Appeals Procedure to be considered by an Appeals Panel.

- 20.4 Students may seek independent advice regarding an appeal from the Students' Union Advice and Representation Centre.

## 21. **External Review**

- 21.1 Having completed the Academic Appeals Procedure, the student may request an external review by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

## 22. **Recording and Disclosure of Information**

- 22.1 Any finding of academic misconduct will be recorded on the student's record and reported to the Assessment Board or Research Degrees Board.
- 22.2 Offences will be kept on file so that penalties can be applied where a student transfers from one University of Lancashire course to another during their period of studies and module credits gained on the former course are transferred to the current course.
- 22.3 Where an allegation of academic misconduct has been upheld, the University will inform relevant third parties of the nature and outcome of the case as required, including:
- the Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body in the case of students on professionally regulated courses or students who are professional registrants;
  - the employer in the case of students on apprenticeship courses or members of staff who are registered as students for a University award or students who are professional registrants.
- 22.4 The University will also reserve the right to inform other third parties of the nature and outcome of the case, including:
- placement providers; and/or
  - potential employers in the event of a reference request.

The student will be informed in the event of any such disclosures.

## 23. **Monitoring and Review**

- 23.1 Academic Integrity Leads will monitor the occurrence of academic misconduct in

each School and create action plans focusing on improvements using standard templates which will be reported to Academic Registry.

- 23.2 An annual report on the occurrence of academic misconduct across Schools will be submitted to the relevant Academic Board sub-committee, paying particular regard to equality issues, for the purposes of assuring the integrity of all the University's academic awards and improving the provision of guidance to students about good academic practice.





Please indicate if form has been copied to the following: Dean of School/Chair of Assessment

Board:

Administrator: Assessment and

Awards:

## Appendix 2

### Procedure for Handling Suspected Academic Misconduct during an Examination

#### Guidance for Invigilators on dealing with suspected academic misconduct (cheating) in an examination

1. If an invigilator suspects a student of cheating during an examination or having access to unpermitted material, this should be reported to the Invigilator-in-Charge. The student should NOT be challenged at this point. The Invigilator-in-Charge should then try to witness the suspected cheating. If it is the Invigilator-in-Charge who has first observed the suspected cheating, he/she should ask another experienced invigilator to see if they can witness what the student is doing.
2. The second invigilator, who is watching the student, should do so discreetly at a distance.
3. If there are two witnesses to the alleged cheating, the Invigilator-in-Charge should approach the student and tell them that they are suspected of cheating by use of the notice contained in the Invigilation File for this purpose (see example overleaf). The candidate must remain behind following the examination. The time of the incident should be noted on the candidate's script. The student should then be allowed to complete the examination in the scheduled timeframe *i.e.* they will not be permitted any additional time because of the incident.
4. A student must not be approached unless two invigilators have clearly observed cheating. If at the end of the examination, the second invigilator has not been able to observe anything specific but is satisfied that the student was behaving suspiciously, *e.g.* spending a lot of time watching the location of the invigilators, the Invigilator-in-Charge may choose to ask the student to remain behind and talk to them about what was observed.
5. At the end of the examination, if two invigilators have observed cheating, the student's script should be collected and the student informed of what has been observed by two invigilators and that this will be reported to the Head of School. The student should be informed that it would be in their best interests to co-operate and that their co-operation or lack of it will be reported.
6. The Invigilator-in-Charge should then ask the student to hand over what they were observed using. If the student denies that they were using or were in possession of unpermitted material, the Invigilator-in-Charge may ask certain questions which will depend on what was observed: *e.g.*
  - i. if the student was observed putting notes in their pocket, the student could be

- asked to empty their pockets;
- ii. if the student appeared to be looking at something written on their hand/arm, the student could be asked to show their hand/arm, which may mean asking them to roll up their sleeves.
7. If the student refuses to answer any questions or hand over any material the Invigilator-in-Charge should inform the student, that the refusal will be noted as part of the report to the Head of School.
8. At no point should the invigilators make physical contact with a student.
9. The Invigilator-in-Charge should check the student's desk to ensure that no unpermitted material is present.
10. If the student is found with writing on their person, the Invigilator-in-Charge should transcribe the material and ask the other invigilator to check that it has been transcribed correctly.
11. Any unpermitted material should be retained by the Invigilator-in-Charge and the student should be informed that this will be given to the Examinations Office.
12. All the invigilators who observed the incident should complete a 'Report of Academic Misconduct' form (see example overleaf) and the candidate should countersign the form. The completed form should be delivered to the Examinations Office.
13. If an Invigilator-in-Charge is unsure of how to deal with an incident, the Examinations Office should be telephoned for advice (x2448).

### Example of Notice

#### *PLEASE READ THIS INFORMATION*

The invigilators in charge of this examination believe that you have broken examination regulations. You are suspected of cheating.

To avoid disturbing the other candidates in this room, the invigilators will discuss what they have seen with you when this examination ends. Please remain in your seat.

In the meantime, you may continue to complete the examination. The invigilator will mark your script to show that you have been given this notice.



UNIVERSITY OF LANCASHIRE  
ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT DURING AN EXAMINATION REPORT FORM  
Candidate's Details:

First Name	Surname
Student Id/Enrolment Number	
School	
<u>Examination Details:</u>	
Module Code	Module Title
Venue	
Date	Time
<u>Report:</u>	
Confiscated material appended: YES/NO	
Invigilator's Name	Signature
Incident witnessed by	Signature

Candidate's Statement:

I acknowledge the details supplied in the above report and I understand that I will be called to attend an academic misconduct hearing.

Signature

This completed form should be delivered to Assessment and Awards